



TOHONO O'ODHAM BAPTIST OUTREACH MISSIONS

September 2019

Dear Praying Friends,

In a few short days, the Autumn season officially begins. For many of you that means that the leaves on the trees are changing, cooler temperatures and everything having a pumpkin smell or taste to it. What does that mean for us here in the Sonoran Desert? Nothing, absolutely nothing! Our Palo Verde and Mesquite trees only know the colors of green and brown and our cooler temperatures mean a drop from a daily high of 110 to 100. Nonetheless, we will welcome any drop-in temperatures as this has been a brutally hot summer. Our 2019, summer Monsoon Season has been nicknamed Non-Soon by the local media as it never happened. Our monsoon rainfall totals normally average 1.5 inches for the summer but this year so far, we have only received less than a .5 inch. Our lack of monsoon has kept temperatures higher than normal. For most of our summer our temperatures have maintained between 110-117 degrees. In June, we switched over to our summer ministry schedule. Due to the extreme heat, we stop our outside archery activities and remain inside the mobile mission trailer for the entire service. To keep everyone safe we have had to cancel services on extreme heat days (117 degrees and up) and have moved the service times to later in the evening during the lower temperatures below 115 degrees.

Since the beginning of June our members have seen tragedy after tragedy unfold in their lives. One of our member's parents was murdered, four of our members have had parents incarcerated over the summer, and one of our families lost their home to fire. While it has burdened us to see such sad events occur, our family has been thankful for the opportunities to point these sad hearts to Christ who is the Great Comforter!

One of our children sat down with Julie one day and told Julie her dad would be going to jail due transporting illegal immigrants across the reservation. When Julie told her, she was sorry to hear that, the little girl asked Julie "does Christians hate Mexicans?". The question surprised Julie coming from an eight-year-old child, but Julie reminded this child that Jesus loves everyone despite race, color, and so on. She went on to explain that as Christians, we are followers of Christ so therefore we are commanded to love everyone, just as Jesus does. This seemed to set this child's mind and heart at ease. While we don't know where the child heard this comment, we do know that God has given us this opportunity to dispel false teachings that aim to tear down the Gospel.

Instructions for submitting financial support to our mission agency:

Mail to:

Beacon International Baptist Mission

PO Box 5907

Johnson City, TN 37602-5907

Make all checks payable to: BIBM

Note: "Billy Ford" in the memo section of your check.



Celebrating Independence Day!



Bible Club fun!



Back to School 2019!



Many of you read our Prayer Focus concerning a family in our Bible Club that lost their home to a fire. We appreciate the continued prayers and emails inquiring how they are doing. Since our Prayer Focus, we have maintained contact with the family. Currently, they continue to reside in an extended stay hotel waiting for the tribe to assist them in gaining new housing. The family has continued to attend Bible Clubs when they can, which has been a blessing as they are driving over thirty minutes to attend. Please continue to pray for them to find stable housing soon.

The month of August is also the beginning of what we refer to as our "Fall Ministry Event" schedule. The first of these ministries was our 3rd annual "Back to School Event". During this event we pass out school supplies to students and Bibles to everyone who attends. This year's event we were scheduled to be at our village Bible Clubs and at Stanfield Elementary School. However, due to a change in the principal and other changes at the school, we were unable to attend the event at Stanfield Elementary this year. While our family was disappointed, God opened other doors for our ministry to serve areas of the reservation we never thought possible. Additionally, after speaking with the new principal by phone, we look forward to working with Stanfield Elementary in the future to serve the kids there.

In the end our event expanded from three event locations to six event locations on the reservations. These extended from the most northern part of the reservation to remote mountain villages to the most southern part of the reservation where we were two miles from the border of Mexico. In all traveling over 1,800 miles in temperatures that most days exceeded 115 degrees. At first, we were intimidated by the challenge of gaining permission from tribal leaders to go into new villages, but God went before us in opening doors and hearts as we had no problems for this event. As some of these were one-time opportunities, others are places that we are currently seeking God's Will in expanding our ministry to. At the end of these events, we would share that each was successful in our goal, equipping O'odham youth with the school supplies they need to have a successful school year and seizing the opportunity to share the Gospel. Our family is in awe at the doors God opened so that these events could happen. We are very humbled at the reality that sometimes God closes one door to open another that leads us where He would have us go. We want to thank Antioch Baptist Church for sponsoring this event. Their commitment makes our Back to School Ministry possible!

Please be in prayer for our family as we begin working on our holiday ministries: Thanksgiving and Christmas. Both ministries are a lot of fun but also a lot of work. Last year Madison wrapped over 220 presents for the event! Both events are the most attended times of the year for our ministry. We not only have wonderful opportunities to share the Gospel but also have new attendees. We are excited to see how God works through this wonderful season.

We are so excited to be within \$5000 of being able to purchase a "newer" truck to tow our Mobile Mission Trailer. We have had a supporting church in Florida commit to donate \$15,000 towards the purchase of a truck as a match to the first \$15,000 that comes in from other donations. We would ask that everyone please pray as we would love to get a truck purchased and online prior to our Thanksgiving and Christmas Ministries in the villages. We are praying that the Lord might open the door for us to include one or maybe even two of the villages that we were in for the "Back to School Ministry" in our other Fall Ministries. Especially the two mountain villages of Ventana and KaKa. Please pray for this fund but also please pray for the people in these villages as they currently have no Gospel witness. But as both villages are in remote locations and have no cell phone signal available, we are going to need reliable transportation to and from these locations safely.

Finally, we want to end this Prayer Letter by taking this time to thank each and everyone of you. Without your prayers, words of encouragement through correspondence, and financial support, we simply could not be where we are at, doing what we are doing, telling all we can that Jesus saves! Thank you so very much!

In Christ,
Billy, Julie & Madison Ford
Missionaries to the Tohono O'odham Nation



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